# Phase-In School Approach

Combining concepts from prior initiatives (e.g. Project EASI) and an analysis of the current delivery processes, a need was identified for a Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) process. It was recognized that there is enough commonality represented in the delivery of Pell Grants, Direct Loans and Campus-Based Programs to warrant a single process. In addition to the benefits related to a single process, COD is critical to achieving an enterprise-wide solution that will provide real-time data to students, schools, and financial partners via web portals and other enabling technologies.

During Phase I and the beginning of Phase II of COD, the Modernization Partner worked with Student Financial Assistance (SFA) to develop a conceptual design for a streamlined, transaction-based payment method for schools. As we jointly move forward in developing detailed requirements and an implementation plan, there exists a critical need for the financial aid community, as well as other internal and external stakeholders, to be well informed on the necessary steps required to make COD a reality. In addition, it is both important and appropriate to solicit input and guidance from our school partners, some of who may be implementing COD as early as the 2002-03 award year.

In conjunction with SFA, the Modernization Partner has identified several mechanisms by which to communicate to and solicit feedback from school stakeholders. These include conferences, working groups and E-Newsletters. An integral part of the working group mechanism involves the creation of a COD User Steering Committee, consisting of approximately twenty (20) post-secondary, Title IV institutions representing all sectors of higher education. This group will be a more consistent "working group", acting as a sounding board on COD issues related to the implementation of business processes and the mitigation of challenges to schools. Third Party Servicers will also be represented in this Committee.

The deliverable will outline the key objectives of the Committee, define the framework for how Modernization Partner will help the Committee achieve these objectives and identify the potential members of the Committee.

**OBJECTIVES**

The User Steering Committee represents a core group of professionals who will provide feedback to SFA/Mod Partner on critical issues relative to COD Process and Development.  The key objectives of the group are to:

- Review and validate key decisions made related to the Common Origination and Disbursement functional design, including business rules;
- Expand and validate the list of Schools Challenges[1], as well as discuss potential mitigation strategies and actions that could lessen the probability and/ or impact of these challenges; and
- Assist the COD core team in determining how to move forward in communicating COD to the all Title IV schools as a request for volunteers to be a part of the initial Phase-In year (2002-2003).  It is hoped that many of the User Steering Committee members will become part of this Phase-In group. (*Please see Appendix A for an outline of the approach for soliciting Phase-In Schools*)

In order to meet these objectives, Modernization Partner will:

1. Facilitate monthly meetings during which specific issues related to program management, functional design, technical design, business processes, business rules and critical decisions will be addressed.  The User Steering Committee will be encouraged to take an active role in setting the monthly agendas.  In so doing, critical issues can be brought to the table in a timely manner and addressed by SFA, Modernization Partner, and the User Steering Committee.
2. Communicate on an interim, ad-hoc basis as needed regarding critical path issues requiring resolution before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the User Steering Committee.
3. Retain all User Steering Committee feedback and input for future reference.  All questions raised will be addressed in a timely manner.  Any inquiries or issues raised requiring research will be responded to within 72 hours.
4. Create an e-newsletter that will be sent to User Steering Committee Members on a regular basis.  In addition, the newsletter will be sent to the members of the COD Integrated Product Team (IPT) as well as the Schools Channel General Manager.

The User Steering Committee will be an integral partner in the development of a viable COD Delivery System.  As such, Modernization Partner will keep the User Steering Committee informed of the status of critical decisions related to the ultimate implementation of COD.  Action items will be presented as part of the monthly agenda or in the form of ecorrespondence to the User Steering Committee Members with a specific "reply by" date attached.

---

[1] A COD working group consisting of Modernization Partner and SFA identified primary challenges schools may face in successfully implementing the new process. A document has been created that chronicles these challenges in the form of deliverable 19.1.5 (Appendix B).  Please refer to the deliverable for additional information relative to the objective of the COD working group.

*Deliverable Date 12/06/00*

## PARTICIPANTS

After receiving input from the General Manager of the Schools Channel as well as members of the COD IPT, the Modernization Partner contacted institutions (9/21/2000), requesting their participation in the User Steering Committee. The Modernization Partner gave consideration to creating a true cross section of schools representing all sectors of post-secondary institutions. The initial group of schools and third party servicers is captured and listed below.

| Participant Name | | School/ Servicer Name | School/ Servicer | Confirmed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Balsano | Debbie | SIU-Carbondale | School | |
| Belvin | Jim | Duke University | School | |
| Bennett | Michael | Brookdale CC | School | |
| Clark | Carlos | Alabama A&M | School | |
| Coats | Rhonda | Washington State CC and Tech. College System | School | |
| Collins | Bob | University of Phoenix | School | Yes |
| DeMota | Gail | KISSystems | Servicer | |
| Douglas | Jennifer | George Mason University | School | |
| Farnlacher | Jeanne | DeVry Inc. | School | |
| Frishberg | Ellen | Johns Hopkins University | School | |
| Gonzalez | Rafael | RPG Mgmt. | Servicer | |
| Gunhammer | Jarrod | Sinte Gleska University | School | |
| Hesser | Cheryl | Colorado State University | School | |
| Joerschke | Bonnie | Purdue University | School | Yes |
| Kelly | Victoria | Ivy Tech. State College | School | |
| Keyes | Judy | UMass-Lowell | School | Yes |
| Little | Laura | FAME | Servicer | |
| Lohman | Rachael | Wilkes University | School | |
| Masisa | Dawn | University of Maryland UC | School | Yes |
| Maynard-Nelson | Jeanette | William Mitchell College of Law | School | |
| Morris | David | Chic College of Cosmetology | School | |
| Moser | Teri | St.Joseph`s Hospital Health Ctr. School of Nursing | School | |
| Neely-Eacona | Elaine | Quest Education | Servicer | Yes |
| O`Flaherty | Sue | Western Michigan University | School | |
| Padilla | Eugene | Albuquerque T-VI CC | School | |
| Rodriguez | Margaret | University of Michigan | School | |
| Sheridan | Rob | University of Houston | School | Yes |
| Tezeno | Albert | Texas Southern University | School | |
| Thornton | Cynthia | Dillard University | School | |
| Tornow | Barbara | Boston University | School | |

*Deliverable Date 12/06/00*